



## Bringing State-of-the-Art Techniques in Chronic Disease Management to Patients in Federally Funded Health Centers

### Producing Results

Arkansas increased the number of community health centers implementing techniques for care of patients with chronic disease, such as electronic data management and clinical information systems.

### Public Health Problem

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in Arkansas, and the state ranks second in the country in deaths from stroke. Arkansas has a larger burden of disease than the rest of the nation, possibly because the state has higher-than-average rates for risk factors. BRFSS data indicate that 30 percent of people in Arkansas have high blood pressure (versus 26 percent in the nation); 26 percent smoke cigarettes (versus 23 percent in the nation); and 27 percent are physically inactive (versus 24 percent in the nation). These risk factors significantly increase the potential for heart disease and stroke.

### Taking Action

The Arkansas Cardiovascular Health Program, through the Arkansas Chronic Illness Collaborative, is helping federally funded community health centers and area health education centers to develop electronic patient-management systems to support control of heart disease and stroke and diabetes. Such clinical information systems have proven effective in helping to improve quality of care and controlling heart disease and stroke risk factors (such as high blood pressure) among patients in federally funded health centers. The Arkansas Cardiovascular Health Program is helping federally funded health centers in the state to apply these proven interventions and is continually expanding the number of community health centers capable of implementing these disease management techniques. Other partners in the Arkansas Chronic Illness Collaborative include the Arkansas Diabetes Prevention and Control Program; the Bureau of Primary Care's Federally Qualified Community Health Centers of Arkansas, Inc.; and the Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care, the state's quality-improvement organization.

### Implications and Impact

Improvements in control of risk factors for heart disease and stroke can significantly reduce risk for heart attack, stroke, coronary heart disease, and death from CVD. The Arkansas Cardiovascular Health Program is helping to bring state-of-the-art techniques in disease management to the vulnerable populations served by federally funded health centers in the state. Public health has a critical role to play in helping to bring these effective measures for prevention of heart disease and stroke to the places where vulnerable populations receive health care and in building the capacity of such clinics to implement these and other public health measures for heart disease and stroke prevention.

### Contact Information

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